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NOTES, REVIEWS, ETC.

A PLEA FOR MICROSCOPY, AS A STUDY AND A HOBBY

Such general terms as Naturalist, Student of Nature, or Microscopist have a peculiar value in these times of specialization. It is worth while at this time to dwell somewhat on their value, as illustrated in our own Society.

1. In the first place it furnishes a common bond between persons of various employments and nationalities—whether experts or not—who are working for a better understanding of nature. The very diversity of the interests of these special students makes this bond all the more necessary.

2. It furnishes a means for mutual stimulation and interchange of ideas, whereby the amateur gets the advantage of the view point of the specialist, and the professional may keep the spirit of the amateur.

3. Not only are knowledge and investigation specialized in an extreme fashion, but the specialization, in the processes necessary to bring work to its completion and to develop it from all needed aspects, is so detailed that the draftsman, the photographer, the maker of instruments of precision, the technician, as well as the biologist, must appear in every piece of good work.

4. There ought also to be something in such a union of interested people, scattered as we are over the whole land, when it comes to coordinating results of similar work from different localities. This is peculiarly true of such studies as vary with locality—as, diseases, plankton, systematic biology, and the like.

5. The proposed resumes and summaries, with suitable but not too elaborate bibliographies, ought to be of very great aid to the rank and file of a general society; and if this Society can furnish such a general review of the important fields of biology it will be a real contribution to the needs of the student.

For these and various other reasons it appears to me that study with the microscope furnishes the most interesting side interest, or

hobby. It is attractive in itself and allies the student at once with many departments of natural science. It is impossible to get out of range of interesting things to be examined, and while different workers will undoubtedly get returns proportional to their interest and insight, ample returns can be had by all.

V. A. LATHAM, M. D.

SOME OF THE NEEDS OF THE SOCIETY AS SEEN BY ONE OF THE
OLDER MEMBERS

In the light of the fact that specialization is on the increase, one of the problems of the society at present is in bringing together and holding together the older and the newer members. The newer members are apparently less interested in the perfecting of methods, and more in the resulting knowledge of biology. The older members possibly like to dwell more on the instrument and on the beauties and adjustments found in it, and on its possibilities as an instrument of precision. We need to see that these interests are by no means antithetical, but rather supplementary. Many modern workers do not use their instruments and their technic to the point of refinement practiced by earlier workers; nor get the full value out of the modern improvements in the microscope and its accessories.

We need also to see that the Society meets the needs of both the beginner and the man of research. If it is worth while to have a general society containing amateur workers, it is worth while to take such steps as will make the society helpful to the independent worker with the microscope, *even when he is making his start*. In many instances the back volumes of the Society will contain much that is valuable to the beginner. Can't we have a series of notes, or a comprehensive article, on "How the New Worker May Independently Take up the Work With the Microscope?" Would not such a discussion, coupled with a brief department of notes and suggestions of a practical nature, help keep alive the amateur and independent worker who has not the opportunity of personal association with other workers?

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